

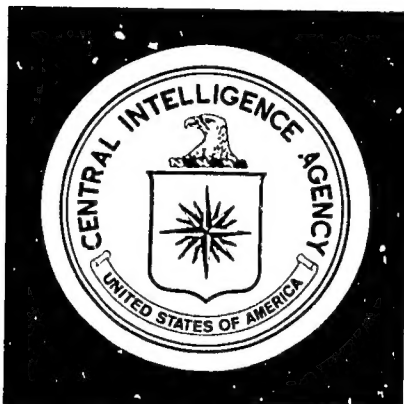
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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

China: A Touch of Paralysis

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1 December 1972

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CHINESE COMMUNIST POLITBURO (Elected April 1969)

STANDING COMMITTEE

Mao Tse-tung (78)
Chairman, Central Committee

~~Lin Piao (64)
Vice Chairman, Central Committee; Defense Minister~~

Chou En-lai (74)
Premier

~~Ch'en Po-ta (66)
Chairman, Cultural Revolution Group~~

K'ang Sheng (72)
Adviser, Cultural Revolution Group; Internal Security Chief

WIVES

Chiang Ch'ing (56)
Wife of Mao; First Deputy Head, Cultural Revolution Group

~~Yeh Ch'un (44)
Wife of Lin Piao; Military Affairs Committee~~

MILITARY LEADERS

~~Huang Yung-sheng (62)
Chief of Staff; Military Affairs Committee~~

~~Ch'iu Hui-tso (56)
Deputy Chief of Staff; Army Logistics Chief; Military Affairs Committee~~

~~Li Tso-p'eng (60)
Deputy Chief of Staff; Political Commissar, Navy; Military Affairs Committee~~

~~Wu Fa-hsien (58)
Deputy Chief of Staff; Commander, Air Force; Military Affairs Committee~~

Yeh Chien-ying (72)
Vice Chairman, Military Affairs Committee

PROVINCIAL LEADERS

Chi Teng-k'uei (40)*
Vice Chairman, Honan Provincial Revolutionary Committee

Ch'en Hsi-lien (60)
Commander, Shen-yang Military Region; Chairman, Liaoning Provincial Revolutionary Committee

~~Li Hsueh-feng (64)*
Chairman, Hopei Provincial Revolutionary Committee~~

Chang Ch'un-ch'iao (59)
Chairman, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee; Second Deputy Head, Cultural Revolution Group

Li Te-sheng (61)*
Commander, Anhwei Military District; Chairman, Anhwei Provincial Revolutionary Committee

Hsu Shih-yu (64)
Vice Minister of Defense; Commander, Nanking Military Region; Chairman, Kiangsu Provincial Revolutionary Committee

Yao Wen-yuan (36)
Vice Chairman, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee; Member, Cultural Revolution Group

GOVERNMENT LEADERS

~~Hsieh Fu-chih (69)
Public Security Minister; Chairman, Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee; Vice Premier~~

Li Hsien-nien (66)
Finance Minister

Wang Tung-hsing (age unknown)*
Public Security Vice Minister; Director, General Office, Party Central Committee

HONORARY ELDERS

~~Chu Te (85)
Chairman, National People's Congress~~

~~Liu Po-ch'eng (79)
Vice Chairman, National People's Congress; Military Affairs Committee~~

~~Tung Pi-wu (85)
Vice Chairman, People's Republic of China~~

*Alternate Members

~~Inactive~~

~~Purged or dead~~

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China: A Touch of Paralysis

Despite the outward appearance of order in China, stability has not been fully re-established since the purge a year ago of Lin Piao. The notion that Defense Minister Lin Piao, the man chosen personally by party chairman Mao Tse-tung as designated successor, could turn against the great helmsman has sharply eroded confidence in the country's leadership. The failure to reconstitute the ruling Politburo and replace the military leaders who went down with Lin, together with the general absence of leadership turnouts and authoritative policy pronouncements, leaves a clear impression that tensions exist among the surviving leaders—an impression that is evidently shared by numerous low- and middle-level cadres in China. Moreover, there are signs that a significant number of military men who hold power in the provinces may also be purged—a situation that involves real risks for domestic political order.

During this time of uncertainty and strain, Premier Chou En-lai has played a pivotal role, seeking to diminish the divisive forces at work while guiding China on the road toward political recovery. It is largely through his efforts that the political, military and economic machinery has continued to function. On the question of the fate of the military leaders in the provinces, for example, Chou seems intent on limiting the damage, at least until the wounds of the Lin affair have had time to heal. His efforts at moderation are meeting resistance, however, and further clashes within the Politburo are by no means out of the question. In such a conflict, Mao's role obviously would be a determining factor, and the aging party chairman seems to be keeping his options open.

A Year of Caution

In view of the magnitude of the problem, the regime has achieved notable success in managing the aftermath of the purge of Lin Piao. Basic social order has been maintained. The armed forces have remained stable while the regime moved to re-subordinate them to civilian party control. The trend toward moderation in domestic policies—a trend evident since 1969 and one that has wide popular support—has been even more pronounced since Lin's departure. In the conduct of foreign affairs, Peking has scored a succession of triumphs in 1972, the fruit of a decision several years ago to pursue a more pragmatic and outgoing foreign policy.

Nevertheless, the events of last autumn dramatically shattered the fragile political mosaic

painfully constructed at the party congress in 1969, and the leadership has been extremely cautious in picking up the pieces. The havoc is most evident within the Politburo itself; only 16 of the original 25 members named in 1969 are still mentioned in the official press by name, and of these only a dozen appear to be taking part in the affairs of state in a meaningful way. The delay in reconstituting the Politburo is undoubtedly associated with the question of the military's proper place in that body.

While the regime wrestles with this problem, the armed forces are without designated leaders. Marshal Yeh Chien-ying has been serving as de facto defense minister but has not been officially appointed to this position. Similarly, no one has been named to replace chief of staff Huang Yung-sheng, and the vacancies at the top of the

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air force, navy, and logistics services remain unfilled. This does not mean that the administration of the armed forces has been neglected or that the efficiency of the armed forces has suffered severely; merely that they have been an uncommonly long time without formally designated leaders.

Because Lin was officially designated Mao's successor, Peking must also work out a new formula for succession and rewrite a substantial segment of party history. The idea of a post-Mao "collective leadership" has persisted for at least a year, and it seems likely that it is the composition of this collective, rather than the principle itself, that is still at issue. While Peking vacillates, the leadership grows older: Mao Tse-tung will be 79 this month, and Premier Chou is 74.

Moderates Versus Extremists

The Lin affair and its sequel make it appear that one of the central issues in Peking is civilian versus military control. In fact, the issues at stake are much more complex. Evidence—some of it antedating Lin's demise—indicates that while the institutional problem is a real one, the leadership has long been deeply divided on a much wider range of policy and personnel questions. The Cultural Revolution itself, with its bitter factional disputes and Red Guard mania, clearly added to and intensified personal antipathies, particularly between radical leaders who were identified with its excesses and those of a more moderate persuasion. It is hard to believe that these antipathies have now vanished or that, on any given issue, they no longer cut across institutional lines, including the armed forces.

The actual facts surrounding the demise of Lin Piao in September 1971 may never be known in detail, but, in any event, it has not ended the rivalry between moderate and radical forces at the center. The purge removed the leading spokesman of radical interests in the armed forces, Lin Piao himself. On the other hand, it also claimed as victims high-level military officers who had been at the opposite end of the political spectrum, most notably the former chief of staff, Huang Yung-sheng. Moreover, a campaign against ul-

traleftists—which had begun in late 1969 and evidently was directed by Chou En-lai—has been muted since Lin's fall, even though a number of extreme leftist figures are still prominent and active. For example, Chiang Ching, deputy head of the Cultural Revolution Group, which directed Mao's purge of the old party apparatus, should have been an early target, but as Mao's wife she has thus far been immune. Another prominent leftist, Shanghai party leader Yao Wen-yuan, continues to appear frequently in Peking.

Despite the uneasy political equilibrium within the leadership in Peking, China's policies at home and abroad seem well defined. Rationality and pragmatism seem to be the order of the day, not only in foreign policy but also in such domestic areas dear to Mao's heart as education. Indeed, some of the present educational policies, such as the broadening of the academic curriculum and the special advantages given to talented students, are a virtual repudiation of concepts Mao himself has advocated in the past. From time to time, there are hints in domestic media that the move toward moderation is being challenged on a selective basis, but these challenges have had no visible impact on policy implementation.

Military Under Fire

The protracted effort to repudiate Lin Piao is almost certainly raising political temperatures throughout the country. Since early this year, cadres have been studying a succession of documents spelling out the alleged details of Lin's coup plot. The key item in this series, the so-called "571 document," contains Lin's purported operations plan. The plan lists not only those forces that Lin could count on for support—primarily in the air force—but also a number of other military units he was attempting to enlist in the plot. The implication is strong that there are elements within the armed forces whose loyalty is being questioned in Peking. The most recent document in the anti-Lin series, issued in early July, is more ominous. It suggests that the central authorities may be considering moves against a wide range of military leaders and that the authorities will not in the future wait for written evidence to move against such individuals.

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CHINA: Missing Provincial Military Leaders



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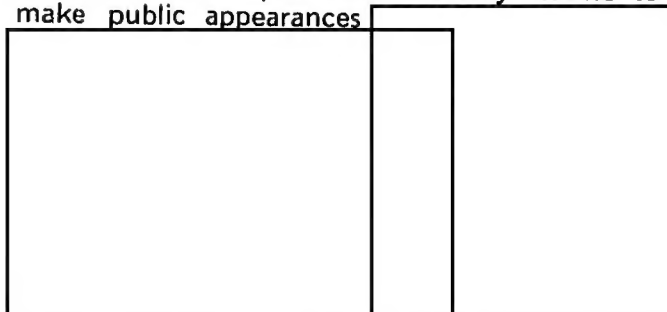
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Some members of the leadership may in fact be exploiting the Lin affair to bring down the military leaders of the provinces. This impression has been reinforced in recent weeks by the failure of a number of provincial military leaders to make public appearances



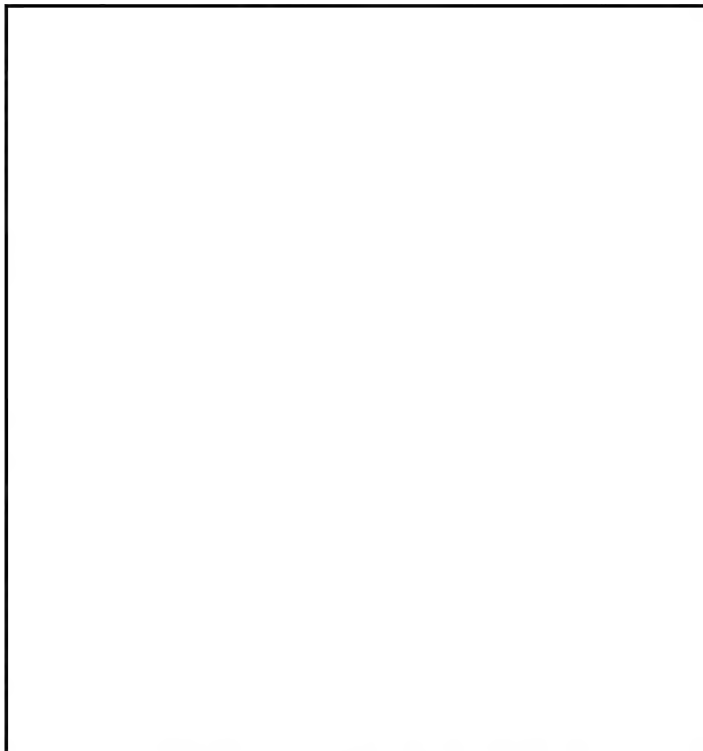
If a move against these leaders is under way, even on a selected basis, it risks jeopardizing domestic political order. The Cultural Revolution dismantled the old party and government bureaucracies, leaving the military as the best available unified instrument of control. Efforts have been made to re-establish the civilian party structure and to reassert the party's leading role, but military leaders still hold the balance of power in the party apparatus in many places outside Peking. Thus, a move against these military leaders, particularly if widespread, could conceivably cause a breakdown in control, since no alternative mechanism is available to fill the void. This consideration could help explain why Peking is moving with such caution in this matter.

Paralysis in the Provinces

The political uncertainty generated by the protracted anti-Lin campaign is having a noticeable effect on life in China's provinces. With the



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Peace at home is an elusive thing.

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Liu Hsing-yuan

levels is likely to continue until the leaders at the center resolve their fundamental policy and personnel problems.

Chou and the Military

Throughout the Cultural Revolution, it was not Lin Piao, the defense minister, but Chou En-lai, with no official military title, who kept the armed forces generally united and loyal during a period of extreme stress.

Given this background, it is not surprising to find that in 1972 Chou is again being linked with efforts to protect harassed military administrators in the provinces.

An example of how a provincial luminary can be buffeted about is provided by the case of Liu Hsing-yuan, a career military officer who ran Kwangtung Province until March of this year. At that time, reports began to circulate that Liu, a close associate of purged chief of staff Huang Yung-sheng, was being transferred to the top party post in Szechwan Province in southwest China. His transfer to Szechwan would serve two objectives: it would separate him from his south China power base, thus carrying out the logical extension of Huang's purge; at the same time, it would preserve his prestige, because his assignment would be an even more responsible post. Similar stratagems were used by Premier Chou during the Cultural Revolution on the behalf of embattled provincial chiefs.

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After remaining in the shadows for seven months, Liu Hsing-yuan showed up again last week in Szechwan. He was identified only as a "leading member" of the Szechwan hierarchy, but the fact that he gave the major speech for the occasion will be a signal to many that he is or will be the province chief. This sequence of events suggests that Liu's transfer may have been opposed by those seeking to reduce the influence of moderate elements within the military establishment. The length of his absence from view could mean that Chou, if in fact he pushed for

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An Accusatory Finger?



Chou En-lai and Chiang Ching at a National Day musical performance on 1 October this year.

Liu's transfer, had some difficulty getting his way even though he finally prevailed.

Chou, in any event, can be expected to have a realistic view of the dangers inherent in trying to reduce the army's political role too abruptly. He is apt to urge caution at every step along this path. The moderates among the provincial military figures would appear to have nowhere else to turn if they are to make their voices heard in Peking.

The Militant Madame

Many of the fires that Chou has been called upon to put out in the last six years were lit by Mao's wife, Chiang Ching. On at least one occasion, she herself was burned. In July 1967, at the height of the Wuhan confrontation, Chiang Ching urged that her militant Red Guard groups be armed in order to defend themselves against the repressive actions of the conservative military

leaders in the provinces. Chaos ensued, and by September 1967 Madame Mao was obliged to back down and disavow her slogan, "arm the masses."

Since 1969, most of the extremist policies associated with the madame and other Cultural Revolution leaders have been discarded, 25X1 Chiang Ching continues to be accorded a high place among the party elite, preceded only by Mao and Chou.

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On the basis of what is known about their behavior in the Cultural Revolution, Chou and Chiang Ching probably differ sharply today not

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Photos taken from a Canton television broadcast monitored in Hong Kong.

only on the question of the fate of military province chiefs but also on a number of other important personnel and policy matters. Since the Cultural Revolution ground to an end, the two have been able to mask these differences from public view, but on several recent occasions foreign visitors to China have detected what they believed to be considerable impatience and annoyance on the premier's part at Chiang Ching's behavior. The fact that Chou and Madame Mao are poles apart temperamentally as well as politically does not mean that they are in permanent and implacable opposition on every issue; nor does Chiang Ching appear to be in a position to challenge Chou directly. Chou, for his part, is in no position to put the madame down completely as long as she retains Mao's patronage.

Mao's Role

As has been the case at times in the past, Mao's role in China's recent internal affairs is

obscure. In some respects, he has removed himself from the public stage. He has not presided over a major public gathering since the funeral of the late foreign minister Chen I in January 1972 and has not appeared on the rostrum at Tien An Men Square in Peking since May 1971. The chairman's periodic meetings with foreign visitors in his private residence indicate that his mental and physical condition are probably not the reason for his reduced public activity.

The pattern of Mao's recent activities, in fact, is reminiscent of earlier periods in which he engaged in intense behind-the-scenes maneuvering, either to shore up his own position or to plot the next move against real or fancied opponents. It could be, for example, that Mao is personally directing the anti-Lin campaign, viewing it as an opportunity to settle scores with a number of provincial military leaders, primarily those whose opposition to the Red Guard

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movement led to a closing out of the Cultural Revolution before it had accomplished all of Mao's objectives.

On the other hand, the chairman must recognize that his close personal identification with Lin renders him vulnerable in important ways. The 571 document contains unusually harsh words about Mao's leadership. It accuses him of imposing ill-conceived and unpopular domestic programs and characterizes him as a "cruel tyrant." This attack on the chairman is attributed

to Lin, and it has been circulated with Mao's explicit approval. Still, the effect has been to give wide publicity to a list of grievances against Mao with which many officials can identify. Indeed, there are signs that the regime—and perhaps Mao himself—are taking steps to disassociate the chairman from the Cultural Revolution experience. A letter now circulating officially seems designed to show that Mao was opposed to Lin Piao and that Piao was less than enamored with "leftists" in general as early as 1966. This hardly seems to conform with the facts.

The 571 Document on Mao's Leadership, 16 January 1972

(Mao) is the greatest dictator and tyrant in the history of China.

The days of B-52 (this reference is clearly to Mao) are numbered. B-52 has consistently adopted the tactics of "divide and rule"; he is very cunning and treacherous and very rarely leaves his residence.

Nobody has ever been able to work with him from beginning to end. Today you are his guest of honor, but tomorrow you will be his prisoner.

He is a suspicious and cruel maniac.

His several secretaries and some people who were close to him were either killed or locked up and struggled against.

The struggle in the party has come to typify his personal likes and grudges.

The leadership of the ruling group has fallen into corrupt, decadent, ignorant, and inefficient hands.

The troops are under pressure, and dissatisfaction is widespread among cadres of the middle and upper ranks.

Initially the Red Guards were hoodwinked into serving as cannon fodder, but now they are being suppressed, criticized, and repudiated. The sending of intellectual youth to the mountains or the countryside is just another form of labor reform.

Cadres sent to the countryside are just swelling the ranks of the unemployed.

The living standard of workers and peasants is falling; the freezing of the wages of the workers, particularly young workers, has increased dissatisfaction.

The socialist system in China is now being threatened in a serious manner.

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At the same time, there has been a marked de-emphasis in Mao's role as the party's theoretical guide. Propaganda organs in China are reverting to more orthodox ways of justifying policy; namely, invoking the authority of the "party line" rather than citing passages from chairman Mao's works. Mao himself has given personal approval to a general playing down of his "cult," however, and speculation within—and outside—China that Mao is losing his grip and is about to step down is at best premature.

The Coming Months

At this juncture, these domestic headaches seem containable. Provincial military leaders are not being faced, either collectively or individually, with the massive public attacks and orchestrated violence that were a leitmotif of the Cultural Revolution. Premier Chou's concern for the loyalty of the armed forces to the political system is surely as great as his concern for the cohesion of the military establishment. On both

Chairman Mao at the Funeral of the Late Foreign Minister Chen I, 10 January 1972



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scores, he is likely to attempt to limit the damage rather than place himself at the head of a group determined to end the pressures against the military, especially if such a stance would involve open defiance of Mao.

Mao's motives in the present situation are less predictable. He was stung by the army's equivocal role in the Cultural Revolution, and vindictiveness on his part could be a major factor in the current drive to unseat the provincial military. Mao presumably is aware of the disruptive influence of his wife, but he seems unwilling to put a stop to all her activities. On the other hand, the chairman's willingness to support relatively conservative and pragmatic policies at home as well as abroad seems to indicate that he is not preparing for another major political offensive at this time. Mao seems intent on establishing a better balance between competing leftist and conservative forces—and hence enhancing his own maneuverability—by whittling away at the predominantly conservative military leaders in the provinces through a process of linking them, however tenuously, to Lin Biao.

Mao may not be content for long merely to whittle away. His seeming lack of activity and the surface calm in China may again only be the reassuring backdrop an old magician artfully develops before he unveils his next startling trick. A hint as to what it will be may have been provided in appointments recently made in Peking. While most of the new appointees are conservatives who were under attack during the Cultural Revolution, there are two notable exceptions. The elevation of these two leftist veterans of the Cultural Revolution points to the possibility of yet another leftward swing of the political pendulum.

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